

## SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 6

By Henry

A RESOLUTION to commend Bruce Overton for his honorable and astute service to the people of Tennessee.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of this General Assembly should pause to specially recognize those estimable public servants who have dedicated themselves to improving the quality of life for their fellow citizens; and

WHEREAS, Bruce Overton is one such commendable individual who, as a Tennessee State Capitol employee, raises and lowers the three flags that fly above the Capitol, proudly proclaiming the seat of state government; and

WHEREAS, a thirty-year state employee, Bruce Overton estimates he has trekked to the top of the Tennessee State Capitol via each one of its two hundred and sixty-three steps more than a thousand times; the building rises to a height of one hundred and ninety-eight feet, which means that Mr. Overton has traveled approximately thirty-eight miles straight up in his twenty-two-year duty of raising and lowering the five-by-eight feet flags that fly above the Capitol; and

WHEREAS, during each session of the legislature, Mr. Overton ensures that the flag of the General Assembly is unfurled beneath the Star-Spangled Banner and the state flag of Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, while Bruce Overton and his partner James Washington exchange new flags for old once a month or so, the two make weekly trips to the top where they may run from six to thirty flags quickly up and down the flagpole for special requests; each year about fifteen hundred requests are received for flags that have been flown above the Capitol; and

WHEREAS, the flags are changed whenever they are torn, which can be from one to three times each month depending on Nashville's weather; the wind will fray and tatter them, and the construction of the flag is such that the stars wear out first; and

WHEREAS, the tower of Tennessee's noble State Capitol building is based on a monument in ancient Athens, and the tower, when illuminated from inside, serves as a lantern for the building; a flag was first flown over the building in 1859; and

WHEREAS, the cut limestone blocks that compose the circular wall of the top landing display the craftsmanship of laborers from one hundred and fifty years ago; the floor at the top has names whittled in its wood dating back to 1909, and dozens of Tennesseans have left their "John Hancocks" scrawled across the limestone walls; and

WHEREAS, during a flag raising, Bruce Overton climbs out of the cupola and into the weather to perform his job, while James Washington stands partially outside the hatchway; after their uncommon and singular job is done, they take a moment to listen to the howling wind and savor the breathtaking view of the city of Nashville; and

WHEREAS, Bruce Overton is wholly committed to the noble precepts of public service that have earned Tennessee recognition as the "Volunteer State," and he should be specially recognized; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED FIFTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we hereby commend Bruce Overton for his honorable and astute service to the good people of Tennessee, salute his dedication and diligence, and extend to him our heartfelt thanks for a job well done.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.